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potency so much feared by the ruling classes and so little dreamed of by its possessors. The nature of this outside influence was manifold. It may have been the pent up feeling of discontent and animosity bursting forth spontaneously and disclosing to the astonished oppressed the might of their own influence. It may have been, as is claimed by Poehlmann<sup>5</sup>, that the favorable conditions of existence under southern skies gave the Roman more time to reflect and enabled him to arrive by introspection at a consciousness of his influence. Was it not rather two other influences more concrete than those mentioned which made this consciousness of revolutionary power an active force—the practical politician and the party struggles of the last 150 years of the Republic? Certainly nowhere did revolutionary movements find more favorable soil than in the large assemblies of the masses, and the energy of one man could, and often did, attract thousands to his standards. Every political adventurer that understood the characteristics of the mob of Rome, its sources of discontent, and how to make use of them, soon had hundreds stretch forth their hands to be armed for purposes of plunder and murder. And, if the proposal was some anti-capitalistic measure, formal street fights were more often the result than not. The object lesson of the party struggles in which a part if not all of the plebs urbana was employed to further the interests of one party or the other was to unite this whole class in the employment of its strength for the promotion of its own interests. In this way this class more and more took protagonist rank upon the public stage as a political as well as an economic factor. It became a power of unrest and of destruction which lasted beyond the Republic and was a constant matter of concern even in the absolute governmental system of the Caesars. The masses had to be kept quiet, and their right to bread and games was openly acknowledged as a means to this end under the Empire. The grain distribution quieted the individual and the games the united body. And yet the excesses of violence grew, despite all efforts at counteraction. The prefect Symmachus had his house burned over his head by the raging mob for no other reason than that some evil-minded individual of the plebs urbana reported that Symmachus had expressed himself to the effect that he preferred to use his wine to slack lime rather than sell it at the current price. This circumstance proves not only the precariousness of the city charity system, but also the irritability of the mob and its willingness to turn loose the dogs of war, once it had come to a sense of its own irresistible power.

The history of the city exemplifies the social characteristics of the plebs urbana, which Sallust has described for us in speaking of the sympathies of the plebs for the Catiline conspiracy. He says<sup>6</sup>,

In every state those who have no means envy those who have. They hate the old existing order and long for a new régime to take its place. Because of a dis-

satisfaction with their own condition they constantly aim at a general revolution. Social disorder and revolution furnish them a livelihood without the accompanying cares, and they need fear no loss, as their poverty gives them nothing to lose.

Such is the picture of the plebs urbana, and the steps by which it reached this stage were practically these:

(1) the evolution in the State of *class differences* from economic conditions for which the money power was largely responsible, and which manifested itself first in the degradation of the plebs rustica.

(2) the growth of *class interests*, when the line between rich and poor became more clearly drawn and other social distinctions vanished.

(3) the development of *class opposition*, as the consciousness of its social status was awakened in the plebs urbana, which had absorbed the plebs rustica and made its interests the same.

(4) the outbreak of *class struggles*, as the consciousness of power arose in this lowest stratum of the body politic.

The economic condition Rome was facing was about the one we have tried to describe. The moral and social disintegration was the most deadly of the diseases that were threatening the commonwealth. Caesar understood much better than any other Roman of his time the character of the problem, and tried to solve it. He saw what heights the proletariat had attained and by what steps it had risen. He saw how the small farms had been swallowed up in the large estates of slave-owning capitalists, how the tasteless extravagance of the wealthy and the political aspirations of the nobles alike drew a sharp contrast between rich and poor, and how this latter class had within its grasp the destiny of Rome, whether it knew it or not. True, the moral and social decay was essentially incurable, and even Caesar could only deal with the worst symptoms of the deepseated disease. However, his remedial legislation was of unimpeachable soundness. He directed his economic reforms against the root of the social discontent in a way that showed he had studied the problem of politics with a scientific spirit, and amid the chaos was laying the foundations of a new harmonious order. His assassination by the oligarchy, who did not see so far ahead as he, was meant to prevent the Empire. This we know it failed to do. It simply plunged the world into renewed strife, and left the work conceived by Caesar to be completed by smaller men in a less noble way. And, more powerful than all, baffling alike the strength of intellect and of physical force, grew the ever-swelling and finally all-engulfing current of the Plebs Urbana.

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## REVIEW

An Introduction to the Study of Language. By Leonard Bloomfield. New York: Henry Holt and Company (1914). Pp. x + 335. \$1.75.

The first point to be noted with regard to this book is that there is no work in the English language with

<sup>5</sup>Geschichte des antiken Kommunismus.

<sup>6</sup>Bellum Catilinae 37.

which it should be compared. Naturally one thinks first of Oertel's *Lectures on the Study of Language*; but that is written for a different audience, and consequently on a different plan. For a parallel the author himself looks back to Whitney's *Language and the Study of Language* (1867); but the study of language, it is hardly necessary to say, has been revolutionized in the half century that intervenes. Midway, to be sure, lies Strong, Logeman and Wheeler, *Introduction to the Study of the History of Language* (1891), a book valuable in its day, but no longer adapted to modern needs. It deserves, however, to be mentioned here because of its relation to Paul's *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*; which, though much closer, recalls that existing between Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie*, Volumes 1-2, *Die Sprache*, and the present work. The book thus aims at doing a service which is being done by no other work.

The importance of this service cannot be overestimated. The teaching of various languages bulks large in the education given to the youth of the country. An important part of our intellectual life consists of the study of the cultural tradition of various peoples, and in this philological work are involved many questions of a linguistic nature. Both teachers and philologists need a knowledge of the principles of linguistic science, for it would seem axiomatic that no one can reflect profitably upon the phenomena of any language, unless he first knows what language itself is.

Whitney found that pupils who had enjoyed "the ordinary training in the classical or the modern languages or in both" were still capable of forming "views respecting the nature of language and the relation of languages of a wholly crude and fantastic character". Professor Bloomfield writes somewhat differently:

While questions of a linguistic nature are everywhere a frequent subject of discussion, it is surprising how little even educated people are in touch with the scientific study of language.

It is in Germany a subject of reproach

dass der Philologe oft noch zu sehr an der altüberkommenen Betrachtungsweise hängt, die von einem mehr naiven als wissenschaftlichen Nachdenken über das Wesen der Sprache hervorgerufen wurde.

The quotation is from the Preface of Brugmann's *Griechische Grammatik*<sup>2</sup> (1889), which was considered worth reprinting in 1899 and 1913, in spite of a certain improvement recognized in his *Kurze Vergleichende Grammatik* (1904), pages V and 30. This improvement was not sufficient to keep Hirt, *Handbuch der Griechischen Laut- und Formenlehre*<sup>2</sup> (1912), 57, from writing in the same strain, "die einfachsten Tatsachen sind unbekannt"; nor Kretschmer from speaking, *Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft*, 1<sup>2</sup> (1912), 463, of "eine bedauerliche Entfremdung zwischen der Sprachwissenschaft und der klassischen Philologie".

Now I have no wish to enter upon the question whether there is a similar condition of affairs among our philologists; still less to seek to parallel Brugmann's

citation of Meisterhans and Blass with American names. But I do wish to suggest that there are symptoms which should lead us to reflect upon this question. Why should the author of a *Greek Grammar* in 1915 feel put upon the defensive for "making use of the principle of Analogy"? That is a straw, but it may serve to show the direction in which the wind is blowing. More serious symptoms are the lack of books already noted; the fact that persons who have been taught from one to five languages are (to put it mildly) "surprisingly out of touch with the scientific study of language"; and that our classical philology is very largely inspired by German philology, which is itself infected with this neglect of linguistics.

Our first need is to base our teaching of the classical languages squarely and fairly upon the principles of linguistic science. To form crude and fantastic ideas about the nature of language ought to be made impossible for any one who has studied Latin. That result cannot be attained without making it a great deal easier for the student to acquire that power of reading Latin which is the key to the enjoyment of its literature and the appreciation of the relation between ancient and modern civilisation. Prerequisite to this is a truer understanding of the nature of language on the part of our philologists and of our teachers themselves<sup>1</sup>.

Under these circumstances it seems to the reviewer that one question alone is of prime importance: Can the work under review render the service it has undertaken to render? This question may be answered without hesitation in the affirmative. Among students of linguistics, there is a general consensus of opinion about the fundamental principles on which their work is based, and such agreement extends frequently even to matters of detail. Professor Bloomfield's book is limited avowedly to the presentation of this 'accepted doctrine', and the non-linguist may use it without fear of being misled upon such questions. To set forth this

<sup>1</sup>The necessity of a knowledge of the principles of linguistic science is not to be confused with the desirability of a study of comparative grammar. I should strongly advise any student who desires to fit himself to be a teacher of Latin or of Greek to include comparative grammar in his preparation. I should not advise any one to 'adapt' Hirt's *Handbuch* for a text-book in our Schools. It seems worth while to say this because we have recently (*American Journal of Philology* 26.242 f.) been told that Hirt "modestly suggests that the gymnasias would do better by Greek, if they ceased to afflict students with a modicum of Xenophon and Homer and taught instead his handbook". This is a misrepresentation of Hirt's views upon a very important question. The problem confronting him at Leipzig may be restated in terms of American life: What shall we do with *graduate students* desirous of becoming teachers of Latin who come to the University ignorant of Greek? That problem is already not unheard of in America and there is danger that it may become acute. At present we seem to have three possibilities: (1) to treat the aspirations of such students as we do undesired kittens; (2) to allow these students to persist in their ignorance, and turn them out with Masters' degrees upon an unsuspecting public; (3) to put into their hands a *Beginners' Book*, written for School children, that they may get a modicum of Xenophon and Homer. Hirt believes that *for such students* a survey of the laws of the structure of the Greek language is better than this modicum of text, claims to have had the best results in so teaching them, and has made his *Handbuch* suited to their needs. In this he may be right or wrong—that is another question—, but the problem is apt to become pressing, and we really should be able to devise some solution better than any of the three mentioned above.

doctrine with sufficient wealth of illustration, in a form that is small in compass and yet such as may be read with ease and pleasure, was no light task; and the skill with which it has been accomplished is deserving of high praise.

On the other hand, the very nature of this task renders it inevitable that another should find points at which he might wish for a different treatment. The broadest criticism I should offer is the wish that more space had been given to the processes of linguistic change. Room for this in part might have been gained by the exclusion of the phonetics of the second chapter, the subject being one that is usually handled separately. I must add, however, that the section is in itself most admirable, and that I should be loath to lose it.

One idea that runs through the book is open to such serious objection as to require separate notice. At times reflective examination of a language may show that certain differences of sounds are distributed according to conditions which may readily be observed and stated. Our English vowels, for instance, are longer in final position and before voiced sounds than before unvoiced, longer in *bid* than in *bit*, in *bee*, *bead* than in *beat*. In such cases Professor Bloomfield speaks of "automatic sound-variation". Now this term suggests very strongly an idea, which Professor Bloomfield would no doubt disclaim, that such changes have no sufficient causes but just happen of themselves—automatically. But even worse than this is another suggestion, that each speaker continually makes these variations (according to the conditions involved) in each production of the sound; that we, for instance, start always with the short vowels and automatically leave them unchanged when we say *bit*, *beat*, but automatically lengthen them when we say *bid*, *bee*, or *bead*. Such a position hardly requires refutation. A phonetic change is a historical event or a series of such events occupying a definite portion of time; the final result is then transmitted by tradition, and it is a mistake to suppose that the process is being continually repeated. Such changes are due to complexes of causes that in their totality are unknown. Sometimes one (or more) of the elements of the complex can be ascertained; we then speak of 'conditioned' phonetic changes. Now, after the change is an accomplished fact, it is obviously a matter of indifference whether such 'conditions' are perpetual or not. The new sound goes on its own path, and what happens to it is another chapter in its history. It is surprising to find that Professor Bloomfield (221) maintains on the contrary that the process is being repeated automatically as long as these 'conditions' are undisturbed.

The pre-Germanic spirant-voicing after unaccented vowel, for instance, left such automatic variations as *\*wāsa* 'I was': *\*wēzumūn* 'we were' . . . ; when, however, the stress was later shifted everywhere to the first syllable, the variation was of course no longer automatic, but purely traditional, as still in the modern forms, *was*: *were*. So, by a pre-English vowel assimilation . . . *\*fōtiz*, the nominative plural

of *\*fōt* 'foot', became *\*fētiz*, a variation whose automatism was destroyed by the phonetic change which dropped the second syllable of *\*fētiz*, giving Old English *fēt* . . . .

The examples really prove the contrary. Old English *fēt* shows that at the time of the loss of the final syllable *\*fētiz* was already established as the traditional pronunciation. Had the form still been *\*fōtiz* varying automatically to *\*fētiz* because of the following vowel, a form *\*fōt* should have resulted when that vowel was suppressed.

The whole concept of sound-automatism appears to me, I confess, as the introduction of some mystic power for which there is no place in our explanation of language. Here also it is entirely needless.

My opinion about the division of syllables and words differs also from that of Professor Bloomfield to some extent, as may be seen by a comparison of the American Journal of Philology, 33.403 f., 34. 157 f. On page 152 examples of Umlaut and Ablaut are given where we have been led to expect definitions. On page 154 it would be well to explain that in distinguishing between sound-variation and affixation there are two points of view, one historical, the other descriptive. From the former, the difference in vowel quantity between *amās*, *amat* (from *\*amāt*) is sound-variation; from the latter, we may either view it in this fashion, or analyse *am-ās*, *am-al*. The historical point of view is not always possible, but the descriptive must not be confused with it. The same applies to affixation and infixation (155) and the Indo-European nasal present would illustrate the impossibility of coming to a decision on historical grounds. On pages 204 f. the discussion of 'phonetic law' might be improved, in what direction can be seen from Wundt's article in *Philologische Studien* 3.196 ff.

Separate mention must be made of the last two chapters. Of these the first, *The Teaching of Language*, is written from the standpoint of modern languages; only *mutatis mutandis* can it be applied to the teaching of the Classics, but anyone who is teaching the latter can surely gain from reading and reflecting upon it. The second, *The Study of Language*, contains very sound and sane advice for the student who is planning to devote himself to the study of language. To the books mentioned in it I should like to add Otto Jespersen, *Phonetische Grundfragen* (Leipzig, 1904), and A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles (Heidelberg, 1909-1914); P. Kretschmer, *Sprache, in Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft* herausgegeben von A. Gercke und E. Norden<sup>2</sup>, 463-564 (Leipzig, 1912: especially valuable for the classicist); and L. Sütterlin, *Das Wesen der Sprachlichen Gebilde. Kritische Bemerkungen zu Wilhelm Wundts Sprachpsychologie* (Heidelberg, 1902).

Professor Bloomfield has put a valuable tool within the reach of teachers of language and philologists. It is to be hoped that the classicists will be among the first to make use of it.

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